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APPLICATION NO.	FILING DATE	FIRST NAMED INVENTOR	ATTORNEY DOCKET NO.	CONFIRMATION NO.
10/603,237	06/24/2003	James J. Luton JR.	RST899	5613

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EXAMINER

PETRAVICK, MEREDITH C

ART UNIT PAPER NUMBER

3671

DATE MAILED: 06/18/2004

Please find below and/or attached an Office communication concerning this application or proceeding.

Office Action Summary

Application No.

10/603,237

Applicant(s)

LUTON, JAMES J.

Examiner

Meredith C Petravick

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-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address --

Period for Reply

A SHORTENED STATUTORY PERIOD FOR REPLY IS SET TO EXPIRE 3 MONTH(S) FROM THE MAILING DATE OF THIS COMMUNICATION.

- Extensions of time may be available under the provisions of 37 CFR 1.136(a). In no event, however, may a reply be timely filed after SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- If the period for reply specified above is less than thirty (30) days, a reply within the statutory minimum of thirty (30) days will be considered timely.
- If NO period for reply is specified above, the maximum statutory period will apply and will expire SIX (6) MONTHS from the mailing date of this communication.
- Failure to reply within the set or extended period for reply will, by statute, cause the application to become ABANDONED (35 U.S.C. § 133). Any reply received by the Office later than three months after the mailing date of this communication, even if timely filed, may reduce any earned patent term adjustment. See 37 CFR 1.704(b).

Status

- 1) ☐ Responsive to communication(s) filed on ____.
- 2a) ☐ This action is **FINAL**. 2b) ☒ This action is non-final.
- 3) ☐ Since this application is in condition for allowance except for formal matters, prosecution as to the merits is closed in accordance with the practice under *Ex parte Quayle*, 1935 C.D. 11, 453 O.G. 213.

Disposition of Claims

- 4) ☒ Claim(s) 1-10 is/are pending in the application.
- 4a) Of the above claim(s) ____ is/are withdrawn from consideration.
- 5) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are allowed.
- 6) ☒ Claim(s) 1-20 is/are rejected.
- 7) ☐ Claim(s) ____ is/are objected to.
- 8) ☐ Claim(s) ____ are subject to restriction and/or election requirement.

Application Papers

- 9) ☐ The specification is objected to by the Examiner.
- 10) ☒ The drawing(s) filed on 24 June 2003 is/are: a) ☒ accepted or b) ☐ objected to by the Examiner.
Applicant may not request that any objection to the drawing(s) be held in abeyance. See 37 CFR 1.85(a).
Replacement drawing sheet(s) including the correction is required if the drawing(s) is objected to. See 37 CFR 1.121(d).
- 11) ☐ The oath or declaration is objected to by the Examiner. Note the attached Office Action or form PTO-152.

Priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119

- 12) ☐ Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
- a) ☐ All b) ☐ Some * c) ☐ None of:
- ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 - ☐ Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. ____.
 - ☐ Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this National Stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* See the attached detailed Office action for a list of the certified copies not received.

Attachment(s)

- 1) ☒ Notice of References Cited (PTO-892)
- 2) ☐ Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948)
- 3) ☐ Information Disclosure Statement(s) (PTO-1449 or PTO/SB/08)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date ____.
- 4) ☐ Interview Summary (PTO-413)
Paper No(s)/Mail Date. ____.
- 5) ☐ Notice of Informal Patent Application (PTO-152)
- 6) ☐ Other: ____.

DETAILED ACTION

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 112

1. The following is a quotation of the first paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall contain a written description of the invention, and of the manner and process of making and using it, in such full, clear, concise, and exact terms as to enable any person skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and use the same and shall set forth the best mode contemplated by the inventor of carrying out his invention.

2. Claims 8-9 and 17-20 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, first paragraph, as failing to comply with the enablement requirement. The claim(s) contains subject matter which was not described in the specification in such a way as to enable one skilled in the art to which it pertains, or with which it is most nearly connected, to make and/or use the invention. The claims include limitations drawn to a servo angle switch. This limitation is found on pages 6-8 of the specification. However, the specification does not describe any details about the servo angle switch. It cannot be determined from the specification how the servo angle switch works with the rest of the invention. Therefore, these claims will not be further examined on the merits.

3. The following is a quotation of the second paragraph of 35 U.S.C. 112:

The specification shall conclude with one or more claims particularly pointing out and distinctly claiming the subject matter which the applicant regards as his invention.

4. Claims 7, 9 and 16-19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 112, second paragraph, as being indefinite for failing to particularly point out and distinctly claim the subject matter which applicant regards as the invention.

Claims 7 and 16 include the limitation "slider type switch" and claims 9-18 include the limitation "joystick type switch." The addition of the word type to a definite expression renders the claim unclear. MPEP 2173.05(a)(E)

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Double Patenting

5. Applicant is advised that should claims 2-3 be found allowable, claims 11-12 will be objected to under 37 CFR 1.75 as being a substantial duplicate thereof. When two claims in an application are duplicates or else are so close in content that they both cover the same thing, despite a slight difference in wording, it is proper after allowing one claim to object to the other as being a substantial duplicate of the allowed claim. See MPEP § 706.03(k).

Claim Rejections - 35 USC § 103

6. The following is a quotation of 35 U.S.C. 103(a) which forms the basis for all obviousness rejections set forth in this Office action:

(a) A patent may not be obtained though the invention is not identically disclosed or described as set forth in section 102 of this title, if the differences between the subject matter sought to be patented and the prior art are such that the subject matter as a whole would have been obvious at the time the invention was made to a person having ordinary skill in the art to which said subject matter pertains. Patentability shall not be negated by the manner in which the invention was made.

7. Claims 1-7, 10-16 and 19 are rejected under 35 U.S.C. 103(a) as being unpatentable over Lane 6,094,896 in view of Stout 5,477,665 and Meehleder 5,040,360.

Lane discloses a trimmer attachment (10) for a mower deck including:

- a device for raising and lowering the trimmer by the operator
- a line trimmer (13)

However, Lane does not disclose how trimmer line is feed and the device for raising and lowering the trimmer is not powered by a servo motor.

Like Lane, Stout discloses a line trimmer. Unlike Lane, Stout discloses a bump type line trimmer that feeds line when the trimmer is bumped on the ground (Column 2, line 65 and column 3, line 1).

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Like Lane, Meehleder discloses a trimmer attached to a mower deck with a device for raising and lowering the trimmer. Unlike Lane, Meehleder discloses making the device for raising and lowering the trimmer have a motor (37) connected to control panel (Column 3, line 51-56). The control panel has a line feed switch (37b) and a servo raise lower switch (37d). The servo motor is electric.

It would have been obvious to one having ordinary skill in the art at the time the invention was made to make the trimmer of Lane a bump type trimmer as in Stout, as one commonly know means of feeding line and to make the device for raising and lowering the trimmer powered by a motor as in Meehleder, in order to facilitate ease of operation.

In regard to claim 18, Lane includes a support arm (18) connected to the trimmer and device for raising and lowering the trimmer.

In regard to claim 19, Lane includes a bearing assembly connected to the support arm and mower deck (attachment between 18 and 16).

In regard to claims 25 and 14, Lance includes a trimmer power switch (25) connect4d to the line trimmer.

Conclusion

8. The prior art made of record and not relied upon is considered pertinent to applicant's disclosure.

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9. Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Meredith Petravick whose telephone number is 703-305-0047.

The examiner can normally be reached on Monday-Thursday from 7:00 a.m. - 4:30 p.m.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Thomas B. Will, can be reached at 703-308-3870.

Any inquiry of a general nature or relating to the status of this application or proceeding should be directed to the group receptionist whose telephone number is 703-308-1113. The fax number for this Group is 703-872-9306.



Meredith Petravick
Patent Examiner
Group Art Unit 3671

6/13/04